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No. 10

• RURAL ART EDUCATION NUMBER •



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FAIR IN THE WEST

Diego Rivera, famed Mexican artist, will be seen this year by visitors at the Golden Gate International Exposition. Rivera has consented to be a participant in the Art in Action Exhibition according to a recent announcement. This exhibition will be the central theme of the Palace of Fine Arts.

Already a great number of outstanding artists of the West have made definite arrangements for participating. Helen Forbes, of San Francisco, will demonstrate tempera; Mazine Albro of Carmel will paint in oil. Glen Lukens, one of the foremost American artists in his field, will produce ceramics. Dudley Carter, known to many for his splendid work on the Shasta Building last year, will do spectacular wood sculpture, working with an axe. Michael Chepurkoff will offer humorous animal sculpture in metal. Antonio Sotomayor, clever Bolivian-born San Franciscan, will create swift and informal caricatures. Marion Simpson of Berkeley has returned from Mexico to paint in oil. There will be weaving demonstrations by Maga Albee and her group, including Jean Fay and Adaline Emerson. Ester Meyer, Ray Burrell, and the Austrian-American Max Pollack, will demonstrate graphic arts.

A unique, comprehensive show of photography will be held in the east section of the Fine Arts Building. This exhibition is being directed by two men who are known for their outstanding achievements in the field of photography: Ansel Adams of San Francisco and T. J. Maloney, editor of the U. S. Camera Magazine.

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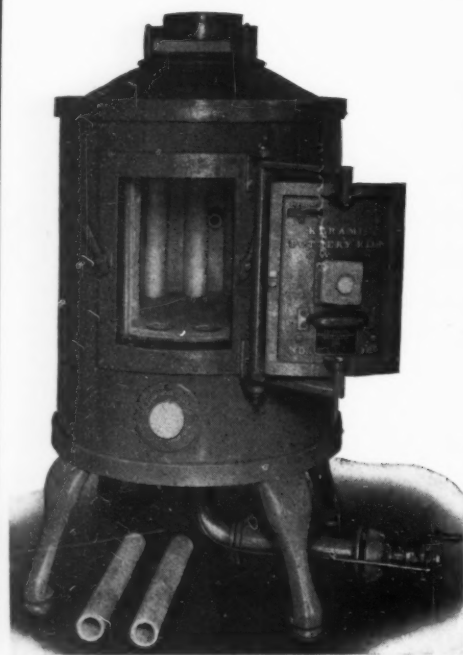
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EDITORIAL NOTE:

Many inquiries have come to our editorial staff from persons desiring to submit material for publication in DESIGN. We are always interested in a wide range of material pertinent to art in its various expressions—art education in its broadest sense, creative art, industrial art, crafts, leisure time activity, new methods and materials, helps for teachers and students. With few exceptions, articles should be fully illustrated. All material submitted should be properly labeled and identified.

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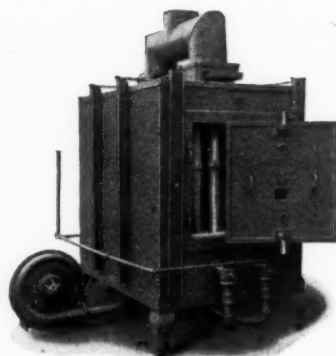
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SUMMER CONVENTION

The summer convention of the Department of Art Education, NEA, will be held at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, July 1, 2, 3. The general theme will be "The Role of Art Education in American Culture and Progress".

Miss Clara MacGowan, president of the Department, who is organizing the convention, announces that there will be these two features. First, a session will be devoted to "Art in the Education of America's Youth". At this session various speakers will examine problems in art education which are directly concerned with high school students and young people.

A second feature will be "Studies of Art Education in the World: Series Number 1". Here speakers will present art educational practices and procedures and data of various countries in Europe and the Americas.

Another event that will be a highlight is the joint luncheon meeting with the American Industrial Arts Association, Tuesday, July 2. Miss Marianne Willis, noted authority on modern design and director of the Chicago Workshops, the speaker, will consider "The Development of Modern Design in Our Time".

The banquet will be the chief event of the Department's convention. This is scheduled for Monday evening, at 7:00 P.M., at Hotel Schroeder. As in the past, there will be two speakers, one of whom will discuss art and the other, another fine art, this time the Dance. Miss Eva Jurgensohn of Seattle, Washington, will represent the latter and her topic is "Young America Dances".

Tickets for the banquet (\$2.00) and the luncheon will be available from Eugene E. Myers, Treasurer, Director of Art, State Teachers College, Mayville, North Dakota.

Complete official programs may be secured from Shirley Poore, Secretary, Supervisor of Art, Administration Building, 715 Locust Ave., Long Beach, California.

NATIONAL PLANNING

It is an event of unusual significance when nineteen national organizations of teachers, formed to promote the interests of their respective subject fields, join hands for the study of a curriculum organized in terms of the needs and interests of children and youth. The National Commission on Cooperative Curriculum Planning, which met for the first time in February, 1939, has now completed its organization, and includes representatives of national bodies of teachers in the fields of the modern and classical languages, English, the sciences, health and physical education, home economics, business education, music, art, journalism, speech, and mathematics.

The first report of the commission is already in preparation. It will deal with those resources for general education which may be found in the respective disciplines represented, and which are related to the task of preparing children and youth for intelligent participation in the life of a democratic society. It will be concerned, not with the development of the respective fields as organized bodies of knowledge or skills, but with the contributions these fields may make to the general education of the learner. The volume will include, in addition to a summary indicating areas of interest to many fields, concrete suggestions concerning techniques of cooperation among teachers of various subject fields. The commission has adopted, in substance, the statement of aims formulated by the Educational Policies Commission.

The representative of the Eastern Arts Association on the commission is Mr. Aime H. Doucette, State Teachers College, Edinboro, Pa. John J. DeBoer, of the Chicago Teachers College is chairman of the commission, and Lilly Lindquist, of Wayne University, is secretary.

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PERSIAN ART

Intimate personal relics of biblical heroes and great conquerors, of whose conquests nothing now remains, is being shown to the public since the Exhibition of Persian Art opened Wednesday, April 24, at 1 East Fifty-first Street, New York City. There is, for instance, a deep lobed silver wine bowl bearing the inscription that it was "Made for the palace of the great king, Artaxerxes, son of Darius" and so on. This Artaxerxes was Ahasuerus, husband to the biblical Queen Esther who plead with him for the Jews. Though he conquered all Asia, Asia Minor, and Egypt, there is left of his personal possessions only this one indisputable remnant. It may be that Esther herself drank from this bowl at palace banquets.

Tamerlane, the earth shaker, was a conqueror after the heart of the present crop of dictators. He showed no mercy and his ambition was infinite. "As there is but one God in Heaven," he said, "there should be but one Sovereign on earth." He died in 1404. Apart from his lofty tomb at Samarqand and his glittering blue palaces, there is little remaining that has any personal connection with him. The exhibition has brought to light and will show to scholars and the public for the first time a manuscript from Tamerlane's own library, containing the only authentic portrait of him known.

This manuscript, a Persian Book of Kings, belonged in the 18th and 19th centuries to the Czars of Russia, one of whom, in 1830, presented it to the Persian Minister to St. Petersburg. The organization of the Exhibition of Persian Art inspired its present owner, H. Kevorkian, of New York, to bring the manuscript out of the trunk in which it has lain for the past twenty-five years.

In what is probably the greatest piece of medieval silver extant, the Exhibition has a personal relic of another Asiatic conqueror, Shah Alp Arslan. The silver salver bears an inscription indicating that it was made for him at the command of his queen to celebrate a victory in which Alp Arslan defeated an army of the Byzantine emperor far larger than his own. The salver is dated 1066, the year of the battle of Hastings. It was lent to the Exhibition by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Many of the great carpets, textiles and manuscripts at the Exhibition represent years of work by supreme artists and craftsmen. Only an emperor could have afforded them and many of them were made for emperors. The coronation carpet lent by J. Paul Getty was made in the early 16th century, probably for the Shah Ismail. Its historic career includes use at the coronation of Edward VII of England. The Emperor carpet, lent by the estate of Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick, was given by the Shah of Persia to a Russian Emperor (probably Peter the Great) who gave it to the Emperor of Austria.

Twenty-seven museums, from Boston to Seattle, and nearly sixty private lenders have shipped their treasures to New York in order that the coming Exhibition may be the most inclusive showing of Persian art yet seen in this hemisphere. The Exhibition is being put on by the Iranian Institute. It is under the presidency of Paul D. Cravath and under the direction of Arthur Upham Pope. All proceeds will go to the Iranian Institute and to the Institute for the Crippled and Disabled at 400 First Avenue, New York City.

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ART in an

INTEGRATED PROGRAM

By Kate V. Wofford

*Director of Rural Education,
State Teachers College, Buffalo, N. Y.*

For years it has been assumed that the rural school, particularly the small one, offered a negative situation for the art experiences of children. Under an older ideology of education and its techniques the assumption was frequently true. Apparently there were many reasons for the hopelessness with which the average rural teacher approached the teaching of art, but chief of these lay in the teacher himself, in the schoolroom environment in which he did his teaching, and in the traditional but then accepted objectives in art education.

It has been only within the past decade that well educated teachers have gone into rural schools in large numbers. In the past, therefore, these schools were taught by the poorest educated, the youngest, and the least experienced members of the teaching profession. The professional education of such teachers had been, on the whole, narrowly conceived within the limits of preparation for teaching the 3 R's. Scarcely more than children themselves, these teachers lacked the experiences which develop a comprehensive philosophy of life and education, and their teaching was consequently technical and they themselves merely practitioners. The artist-teacher, now an important factor in modern education, scarcely existed at all.

Like the teacher, the organization of the educational program in the small rural school lent itself poorly to creative teaching. Emphasizing the tool subjects and their mastery, the school day was "scheduled" into short class periods in which the teacher "heard" lessons, and these amounted to little more than a testing of subject matter. If art were taught at all, the teaching of it was accomplished in isolated periods of one-half hours one day a week. These art lessons consisted, on the whole, of exercises in applied design, photographic representation, skills, and techniques. As might be expected the results of such art experiences were frequently uninspired and unintelligent, shallow in thought, and dishonest in execution. The average teacher stifled any pricks of conscience he might have had in this program by calling to mind the accepted educational philosophy of that day: that art was for

the gifted few and try as he might to find them, few talents were visible in the thirty similar sketches of lights and shadows which frequently adorned the display boards in the school room.

Today the modern rural school is surely developing into something which is different. The teacher is better educated, is more experienced, and has developed a more comprehensive philosophy of life and education than his predecessor. All of these advances are reflected in teaching. The most significant advance, however, so far as art education is concerned, has been accomplished in the changing philosophy of education under which the modern teacher operates.

A significant feature of this philosophy is an assumption that art is no longer for the gifted few but that it is a common heritage to be shared with the average child. This is not to say, of course, that all children are potential artists. This would be, indeed, a refutation of what we know about the individual differences in children. There are varying degrees of art ability in children just as there are degrees in their ability to learn arithmetic. All children must have a minimum of arithmetic, however, if they are to live completely and satisfactorily in a world dominated by the symbols of numbers. The school has accepted this responsibility for teaching numbers for a long time. What we have not accepted until recently is the fact that art is as essential and as functional in a modern world as are the 3 R's. If all children cannot be artists, each is a potential consumer of art, and it is the responsibility of education to see that he is a discriminating one. Moreover, discrimination like all other factors in good taste, develops only through experiences. Consequently, all children should have experiences in art designed both for expression and for developing standards. Once the above philosophy is accepted art education will of necessity develop into something more vital than the isolated treatment of skills prevalent a few years ago.

Further, if all children are to have adequate art experiences, then all teachers, specifically those who

teach in elementary schools, must have professional preparation for this new responsibility. Such preparation is desirable for all teachers; it is essential for teachers in preparation for rural schools. These schools rarely have an art supervisor and almost never a special art teacher. The only person who can possibly supply the art needs of rural children is the classroom teacher. The sooner teachers, colleges and administrators accept this fact the better rural children will be served in the field of the arts. For too long we have rationalized our failure to supply rural children with art experience by stating that the average rural teacher cannot teach art, and, failing supervisors to promote it, the program is better served by its omission. Not all teachers in the rural schools can teach handwriting, but all try, and nearly all grow in performance and in the ability to teach the subject through the experience. Art should fare at least as well.

Fortunately, there is a recent development in the general field of education which augurs well for a new emphasis on art. There is a growing belief that the educational process for children should be a rich and integrating experience. This means a rejection of the older, compartmentalized approach to subject matter and the substitution therefor of a series of experiences built around problems in which children are interested and for whose solution they feel a need. Once this organization of curriculum materials is accepted the school day can no longer be divided into a program which schedules reading at nine o'clock, social studies at nine-thirty and art on Wednesdays only. Subject matter and techniques are taught as they are needed, and so program and curriculum become an integrated thing.

One of the most important integrating factors in this new conception of education is the art experience of nearly all subjects—to music because it is in itself an art and is intimately related to all creative activities, to the social studies because art truly mirrors the culture of a people, and to the language arts because art expression can clarify the clumsiest words. In the modern school, therefore, all the children at some time or another in all the subjects will have experiences in the arts. They will model clay objects to assist in an understanding of primitive cultures, they will paint scenery as the need arises for a dramatization in literature, and they will create costumes for a modern dance. Art in the modern school is an integrating factor; it is also, as in life, highly functional.

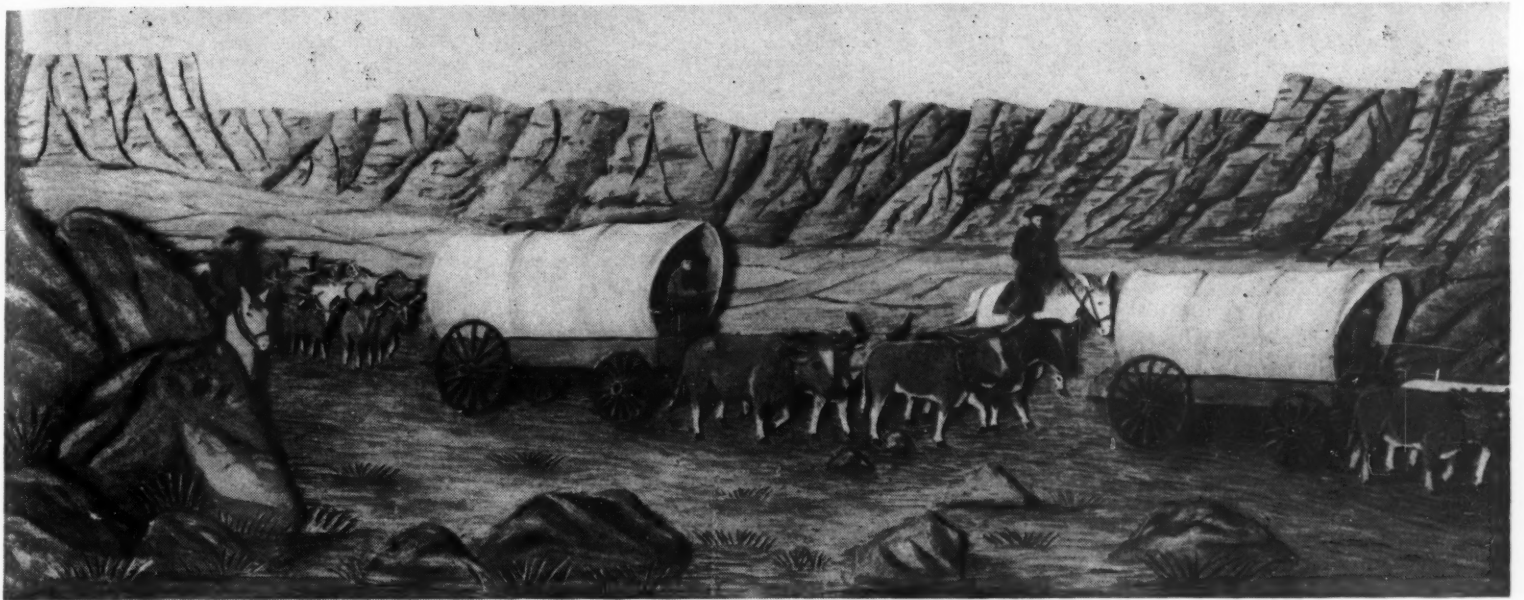
A word of caution is perhaps necessary at this point. Because art lends itself well to integration it finds in the process its greatest opportunity for service. Here also lies its greatest danger of developing into the lightest of piffle. The organization of subject matter around problems of core curriculums does not guarantee a rich educational experience for children. It does not, indeed, guarantee any departure from the traditional type of school organiza-

tion. It can be, and frequently is, an old type organization of subject matter masquerading under new names. The interests and needs of children are thus disregarded in the present, as in the past, and art then becomes merely another vehicle upon which—to quote a recent article—"subject matter rides home a bit more comfortably."

It is well also to keep in mind that while art has valuable integrating possibilities it is first of all a creative experience. Its contribution to child development can be measured almost wholly in terms of its creativeness. Creation, however, does not take place ordinarily through dictated procedures. It flowers best in an atmosphere of complete freedom. Particularly is this true of young children from three to eight years of age. If we give them freedom and materials they will reward us a thousandfold for our trust in them. The merest suggestion will set their imaginations running in all directions. There is no limit to what we can expect of them, and if they have not been spoiled by adult criticism and standards their work will be sincere to their own experiences and vivid with their own radiant inner life. Somehow in the new integrated program the modern teacher must provide for such freedom. This means that children must be given opportunities for expressing their own experiences as well as depicting the great wall of China on a sand table when the unit calls for such an activity.

Fortunately, the modern rural school lends itself naturally to such adjustments. Because the supervision of it has never been rigid, neither the daily program nor the organization of subject matter have developed into sacred cows, as they have in many urban graded schools. The teacher in the small school has always been pressed for time, and the movement toward the integration of subject matter seems to him good sense as well as good teaching. Art teaching then falls naturally into an integrated process, and techniques are taught as the needs for them arise, and not necessarily when the course of study calls for them.

A further advantage enjoyed by the modern rural teacher lies in the philosophy which directs technique toward an educational process which begins at home. This is the very essence of art. It has always begun "at home," and has developed out of the experiences of the artist who has had something important to say about them. Much of our soundest modern art, at least that indigenous to America, is developing out of the American rural scene. Grant Wood, John Steuart Curry, and Thomas Benton are a few of the exponents of the beauty which lies about the average rural school. "Beauty lies all about us" says Emerson, "we are immersed in it." But the average rural child is unaware of it. So, unfortunately, are the average rural parent and teacher of this child. Perhaps the greatest contribution that art can make to rural children is to develop in them a sensitiveness to the beauty which lies about them.



SANTA FE TRAIL

A woodcarving by Irving J. Gardner, University of Wisconsin



THE OLD PROSPECTOR

A woodcarving by Vernon Lemerond, University of Wisconsin.

Rural Art in Wisconsin

BY JOHN STEUART CURRY

During the last twenty years the American artist has turned his eye for subject matter to his native land. He has begun to understand the American scene and apply this understanding to design. The first rural Wisconsin art exhibit brought forth works from heretofore unknown artists in the state—those from the farms.

Dean Chris L. Christensen, of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture, felt that the talent of farmers and rural people should be given a hearing in a sympathetic setting. He appointed Professor John R. Barton, of the Department of Rural Sociology, to head the committee to select and arrange this showing. Professor Barton, working through the county agents, got in touch with the artists and in certain counties the agents arranged county exhibits.

The following is a resume Professor Barton made of certain aspects of this project:

"Thirty rural farm people from thirteen counties contributed works of art for the first rural Wisconsin art exhibit in the Memorial Union, January 29-February 2, during the annual Farm and Home Week. Personal information has been secured from twenty-two of the thirty, of which nine are men and thirteen are women. All the men are farmers, although one has just left the farm to study art, another has part-time employment as a welder, and one part-time painter was formerly a country blacksmith. Five of the nine men are single, and their average age is forty-four years.

"Seven of the thirteen women are single and their average age is forty-three. The occupational status is more complex for the unmarried women, as one might expect. All the married women are keeping house for farm families, and average fifty-four years in age. Of those unmarried, two are teaching school, one is employed as a county nurse, one is a professional artist living on a farm, one girl of twenty-one teaches music, another is studying at the Layton School of Art, and a thirty-three-year-old farm woman is running a forty acre farm. The median age of this group is thirty-one.

"Nationality backgrounds show little correlation

with state proportions. Fifteen of the forty-four parents were listed as of German origin, four Polish, two English, two Bohemian, six Irish, one French, and one Norwegian. Seventeen of the twenty-two have lived in Wisconsin all their lives and of the other five, the shortest period of residence in the state is ten years.

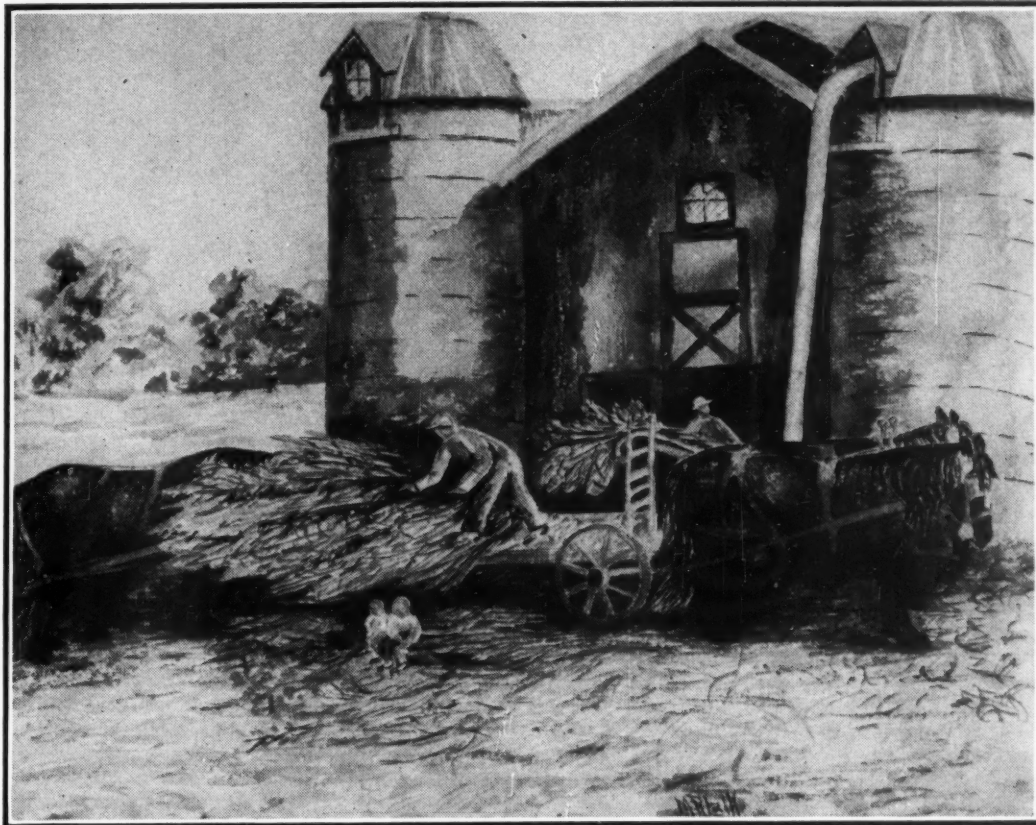
"Ten people had had no previous art training, and half of the twelve who listed such training, described it to be of a very fragmentary nature. One woman who painted one of the best pieces, did the painting after she had taken a correspondence art course from Minneapolis. Five have had private teachers, one of whom was a farm girl's mother. Only one of the nine men has had any formal training.

"Some of these rural farm artists were discovered for the first time. Only six had exhibited their work before in some general exhibition. Nine had placed work in some local or county exhibit, and seven had never exhibited anywhere.

"The motivation for such art work is predominantly creative self-expression or what is often called creative leisure-time activity. Seventeen gave such motivation to their activity, while three gave a distinctly religious interpretation of their art. Four of the twenty-two sell enough of their work to help with their livelihood, and one young girl hopes to become an art teacher in country schools. Only one plans to become a professional artist in the city."

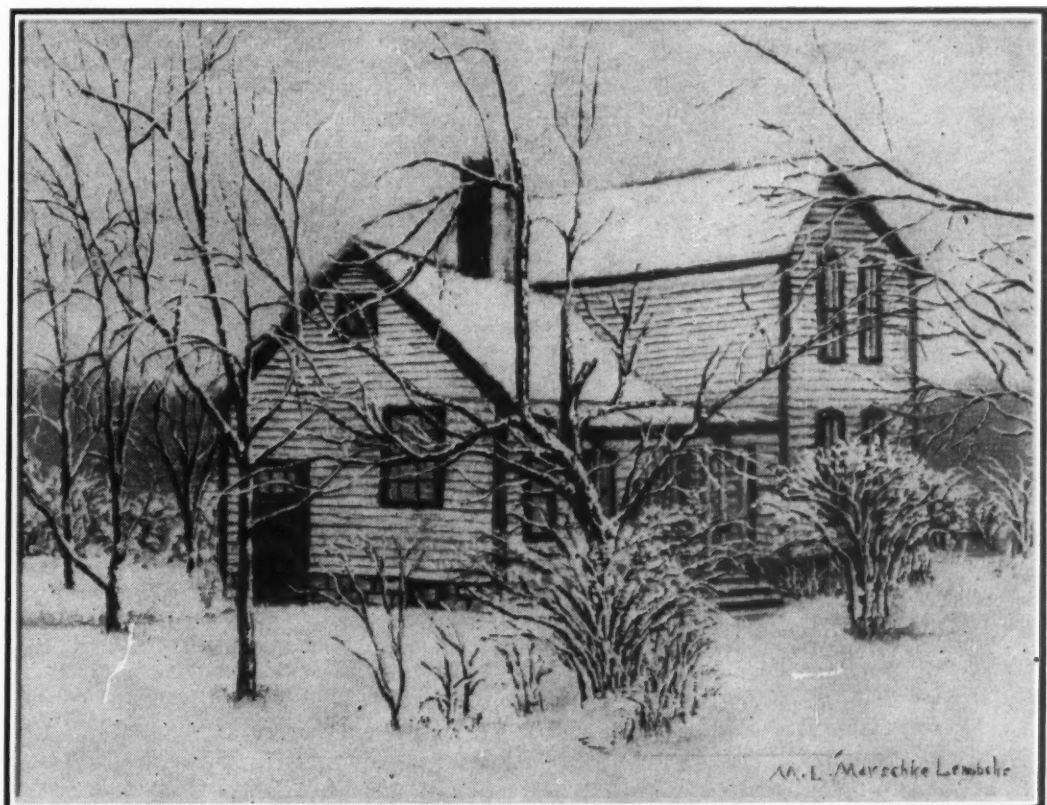
It was interesting from a craftsman's point of view to see the effects some of these artists attained with the most primitive tools and poor painting materials. A great part of the painting was on wall or card board with a coat of flat white for a ground.

In talking with some of the artists, technical problems were found to be uppermost in their minds. Their chief esthetic concern was to achieve a true effect of nature as they knew it. This attitude contrasts strongly with the modern sophisticated idea of bending the form of nature to fit a preconceived mannerism or theory. Most of the designs were made from a knowledge of the subject and were not, as might be supposed, literal copies or nature.



FILLING SILO

A painting by Mrs.
Lalk, University of
Wisconsin.



WINTER HOME

A painting by Mrs.
Lembke, University
of Wisconsin.

FOR JUNE, 1940



HAWAIIAN COURTSHIP

A woodcarving by Irving Gardner, University of Wisconsin.



PRIZE COW

A painting by Mrs. John Powers, University of Wisconsin.



STALLION

A painting by Amelia Snyder, University of Wisconsin.

Use of Native Materials

IN RURAL SCHOOLS

By Felix Payant

It is not uncommon for teachers interested in the modern point of view in Education to complain of the cost of materials for use in art classes. In many schools there is little or no money available for purchasing the type of materials necessary. The best educational philosophy today calls for creative expression not only in terms of the spoken and written word, but in three-dimensional form and color.

All too often, especially in rural schools, the teachers pass up excellent opportunities for the use of extremely valuable materials which abound in great plenty. While they long to pattern their work after what is done in great metropolitan areas, where of necessity art is limited to a few commercial materials, they are overlooking the fact that such materials as clay, wood, rushes, vegetable dies, and many others closely allied to the earth may be much more educational and cost nothing.

There is much to be said in favor of an awareness of those materials in the community, which has been associated with the development of civilization from the very beginning. It is evidently true that the arts must be taught in our modern educational program as an inseparable factor in life. As far as the school is concerned this means that the arts must be taught in our modern educational program as an inseparable factor in life. As far as the school is concerned this means that the art phase of the curriculum must be intimately related to the realities of life and what goes on in the school. Instead of having less opportunity in art than the highly compartmentalized school systems of our large cities, the teacher in the one-room school or the consolidated school has a decided advantage over his city confreres. The rural school teacher is challenged. With the proper point of view he may develop a type of appreciation, and creative expression which could easily expose the weakness of our so-called public school art. Too often this is centered around the 9 x 12 Manila paper and wax crayons.

To explore the possibilities of satisfying the need for art expression as a part of the life in one-room rural schools near Buffalo, New York, some time was spent on Wednesday mornings for several weeks with this end in mind. A little investigation revealed that there was native clay to be found in the immediate neighborhood of the school. The teacher and some of the older boys brought a liberal amount of this to school to experiment with. On bright sunny

spring days tables were arranged in the schoolyard and covered with oilcloth. Several children worked at each table. There were several very large table-like tree stumps in the schoolyard with very flat convenient tops. Some of the older boys worked at these. The younger children modeled rather freely animals and figures which they produced with no encouragement. It was a long-looked-for opportunity to express themselves in plastic form. Older children were eager to know how pottery was made and listened eagerly to information regarding such matters as wedging the clay and removing foreign matter. Work started with zest and very soon these rural youngsters were building bowls, vases, and various receptacles, using the coil method. These were placed in the sun to dry.

The matter of firing or baking the clay products is a problem, but not altogether an impossible one to solve. In many cases there are kilns available not too far away. In rural schools it is excellent experience to have the children fire the clay as some of the Indian pottery still is fired today. A very simple method of firing is to dig a bowl-like hole in the ground. This is filled with sand or gravel with as little foreign matter in it as possible. When the pieces of pottery or clay figures are "bone dry" they are buried with sand in this depression, being very certain that the inside of the pieces are self-filled and the tops are well covered. Over this the fire is built and kept burning all day long. At the close of the day the fire is allowed to die down and is covered with black soil. This is done to prevent the sand and pottery from cooling too suddenly. It should be allowed to stand for at least a day before the pieces are removed in order to give the best results.

Because clay or ceramic products need to be fired, it is advisable as a general rule to discourage the use of substitute materials for clay, or substitute glazes. This is, however, dependent upon the ultimate objective. Very little appreciation for the important art of ceramics can result from the use of substitute commercial composition or "faked" glazes.

Wood, too, offers no end of possibilities for creative expression in rural areas, and there are very few places in America where wood is not plentiful. In the one-room rural school near Buffalo pupils of various ages in the school felt an urgent need for doing rather large decorative lettering. Suitably

large lettering devices were easily provided by stepping into the woodlot adjoining the school and selecting straight dry twigs approximately a quarter of an inch in diameter. These were cut to a wedge-like point. They worked very well as lettering pens when dipped in ink. As most of the pupils were able to do manuscript writing very commendable results were produced in lettering posters, placards, etc.

Bird houses made from hollowed-out trunks of small trees were but a few of the objects made. And there is practically no limit to the possibilities in this direction. Whittling is an art which could well be revived as a means of experience form. Wood sculpture of a type suited to the ability of children would be an excellent means of understanding sculpture as one of the important cultural inheritances of the race.

One might go on endlessly mentioning the unlimited uses of the materials which practically surround the average rural school. One hears of places where large relief maps were dug in the ground as a means of vivifying geography. Trade routes and important rivers were indicated by strips of tin, etc.

In certain places in the South paint or show-card colors were made from clay. They ranged in color from pure white and grey to red and pink. These were made in quantity and cost practically nothing since the only substance to be bought was a little gum arabic and oil of peppermint. Finger paint may also be made of clay. Paint brushes may be made from hog bristles by fastening them properly

to the end of the stick. Corn cobs have been used for making toys of many kinds. And of course corn husks have been put to unlimited uses, including the famous corn-husk dolls.

Cat-tail rushes gathered when the cat-tails turn brown in early September may be used for making baskets, rush seats for chairs, etc. These should be dried in the dark to retain their interesting color. Straw may be used to make toy dolls of different sorts.

Pine needles, especially the long variety, make excellent baskets. Gourds, seeds, nuts of various kinds, all offer the most valuable and educational possibilities.

Outside of the native materials, obviously, are the waste materials available on all sides which have been discussed more frequently. Odd pieces of cloth, felt, paper, cardboard, tin cans, spools, newspapers, wrapping paper, wire, string, are but a few of the sources to be considered by teachers who feel they cannot enrich their work by art expression for the lack of materials.

However, the great argument in favor of native materials is that a valuable point in art appreciation is the understanding of how man made his living vivid, interesting, and beautiful by converting natural resources into the many fine things we see about us today. And here again it is well to remember that art and making useful things beautiful with simple native materials, played an important part in man's life. Art was a part of man's life before it was shown in a museum.

NORTHERN WOODS

A painting by Herman Krause, University of Wisconsin.





A free watercolor painting by Jean Howell, Grade 3, Sebastopol Union Elementary School.

ART IN THE MODERN RURAL SCHOOL

Have you seen men plow orchards in the spring?
Blooming apple rows for warp,
A crimson tractor shuttle,
An earth-brown furrow reeling wool—
The farmer weaves a pattern.

Art in the rural schools must lay its major emphasis on appreciations and the joy of participation rather than on the perfection of techniques and skills. In the development of this appreciation and in the opportunities for aesthetic expression, equal emphasis should be laid on dancing, music, poetry, drama, writing, drawing, painting, construction, and crafts. Through these creative activities pupils should be allowed to interpret Rural American scenes and ideas which are pregnant in inspirational theme.

Although we usually work with all forms of creative expression separately, our underlying purpose must always be to release and develop children's creative power, rather than to perfect any separate technical skill. In rural art education, particularly, it is the teacher's ability to release the pupils' crea-

By Harold E. Gregg,
Dir. of Art Education
Sonoma County, Calif.

tivity and not the scope of her own technical knowledge that is important. However, she must have an acquaintance with many forms of art, know something of the art background, have an understanding of general art principles, and the interrelationship of all art forms. This teaching technique is fundamentally the same whether the instructor is dealing with music, drama, crafts, or any other creative outlet.

Rural school teachers must also think of pupils in relation to their environment. Rural people spend their lives far from organized cultural centers, far from the great collections of antiques, exhibits of art, theatres, music halls, and museums. These people, more than any other group, need to appreciate their true position in life, their heritage, and the art common to all rural people.

A man plods all day with heavy feet, burning hands, and the sting of sweat in his eyes is the man art should reach.

All who labor would be happier if during their years of growing up they had learned

- to see beauty in nature,
- to feel the rhythms of their own deep breathing,
- to hear the song that the buck-saw hums,
- to know they are not just men who reap, but they are a part of a great pattern
- a pattern made up of men and women beginning a millions years before Christ,
- to appreciate what they have been in the past and what an important part art has played in all these centuries of work.

In order that the people of rural America may better understand and appreciate their own culture, they should know some of the contributing factors to that culture. The historical, racial, religious, political, and economic elements which help make up this country's background have influenced the artistic experience of rural people. Children should develop an understanding of this heritage. Each rural school day should be filled with opportunities for the child to experience and express some phase, some element in this broad cultural background which is slowly taking shape in his mind. The elements which make up this background will help the child

judge and appreciate each new addition to his understanding. Each reaction to a new experience, new view, new emotion, or new thought will be related to this background and in its turn will influence the pupil's joy and interest in all new experiences.

One of our most important objectives is the feeling of the interrelationship of all forms of art expression and the realization that, fundamentally, all art is based upon the same aesthetic elements.

The rural school can help children develop an understanding of the aesthetic elements in art through observation and appreciation of their own environment. Consider the aesthetic elements as found in nature:

The rhythm of long rows of poplars,
of bare feet beating on road sand,
of a succession of low hills and of furrows
on those hills,
of a cow's plodding swing and her relation to
music.
of a bug's track in dust and his relation to
Gothic border designs.

Not the abstract theory of pattern but
the pattern of sheep on hills,
of an airplane view of patchwork farms,
the beauty of contour cultivation and its

Outdoor sketching is carried on as an art activity in Sonoma County





"A man who plods all day
with heavy feet, burning hands . . ."

similarity to some silken moire.
The sweeping line of hills
its recurrence on a horse's flank
the transit-accurate flight of geese intersect-
ing banks of clouds.
Color harmony, sequence, and rhythm, not on
the color wheel
but yellow, yellow-green mustard bloom on
chocolate earth.
The accent of weathered, red roofs above an
endless spread of spring grass.
The thousand values of brown earth and moss
and bark and leaf.
Not the term "Notan" but the pleasure of
seeing the dark-light pattern of black posts
and willow tracery against snow and sky will
live long after the aesthetic explanation is
forgotten.
The functional textures found in every rural
view:
in velvet stubbles,
in shimmering silk of blowing grasses,
in oak in the valley and their affinity to hay
shocks,
on a shake roof.
These textures eliminate monotony and give
accent to the integral parts of rural Amer-
ica.
Not the model blocks of form
but a silo cylinder
intersecting a rectangular barn
with a cowshed completing the composition
—all against a plain,
which, from where we stand,
only hints of the spherical forms we know
exist.

What can the teacher do to carry this interpreta-
tion of nature into the classroom? What activities
will lead to a better appreciation of art in a rural



Photos courtesy F.S.A.

"The beauty of contour cultivation
similar to some silken moire . . ."

environment? What daily participation in art will
help children develop sensitivity to aesthetic pleas-
ures, creativeness, ingenuity, and self-expression?

The art program of the modern rural school should
include:

1. The daily use of crayon, pencil, and chalk to
express current ideas: fast, brief sketches used as a
graphic language; drawing used to supplement words
in all parts of the curriculum. In language, we teach
letter forms; in art, we teach art forms. But it is
the use of these forms for expression and not the
symbols themselves which we should emphasize.
2. General conversations leading to a better un-
derstanding of art, its elements, its history, and its
people, all in relation to rural life.
3. Collections and examples of art in nature,
industry, crafts, music, literature, and dance. For
an example of art in nature, choose one aesthetic
element, such as color. Our collection would include
a certain hue, and shades of that hue, found in
leaves, rocks, and scraps of earth, in petals, seeds,
and weathered bark.
4. Outdoor sketching carried on as an art activ-
ity in conjunction with nature study or social studies
activities or just for the joy of selecting and arrang-
ing some group of ideas on a page.
5. Free sketching inspired by music, poetry,
prose, or dance. This will go far to establish a
common basis for the consideration of all creative
expression. Let children have chalk, crayon, or
paints and let them paint or draw anything they wish
during a radio broadcast of Standard Symphony
Hour or while the teacher plays reproductions of
good music for the class.
6. Arrangements of room, books, objects on a
table, notices and sketches on a bulletin board, of
flowers and other materials nature has to offer for a
beauty corner.

7. Painting showing freedom of movement and flow of color from a brush—younger children standing before their easels using bright, intense powder paint mixed in paper cups—older pupils using pure clear swishes of water color.

8. "Cut and paste" as an art medium and not as an exercise in precision. Colored paper, scraps of cloth, a pair of scissors and an idea to express is all that children need.

9. Claywork treated plastically and not technically—hands free to change the pliant medium in any way possible as long as the resulting form is pleasing—will lead the imagination to work in third dimension and will formulate the concept in full relief. Clay is an excellent medium for bringing about a feeling of kinship with art through thousands of years of man's aesthetic urges.

10. Printing—with linoleum blocks, with inner-tube rubber cut with scissors and glued to blocks, with potatoes which have been carved. These mediums allow freedom for a single design or an opportunity to produce "rollicking" rhythmic patterns either in over-all or border designs.

11. Weaving, like claywork, can become a pathway into the past as well as a creative art expression of the present.

The rural elementary school should not try to make artists. Teachers should be concerned with the children's attitude and their ability to enjoy the surrounding beauty. For the most part, they must derive their joys and satisfactions from things their eyes see, their ears hear, their hands create. They should develop their faculties as far as possible so that they can exercise to the fullest, the sources and stimuli of joy.

Rural children will become happier adults if they possess an appreciation of art. This appreciation cannot be taught. It must grow and develop. These are steps in the development of an art appreciation:

1. Bring the pupils into contact with beautiful things which are on their level of understanding.

2. Let them experiment with many mediums of expression.

3. Help the pupils develop a broad vocabulary and acquaintance with art forms.

4. Help children recognize creative urges and relate these urges to a background which will orient them to the whole scope of creative expression.

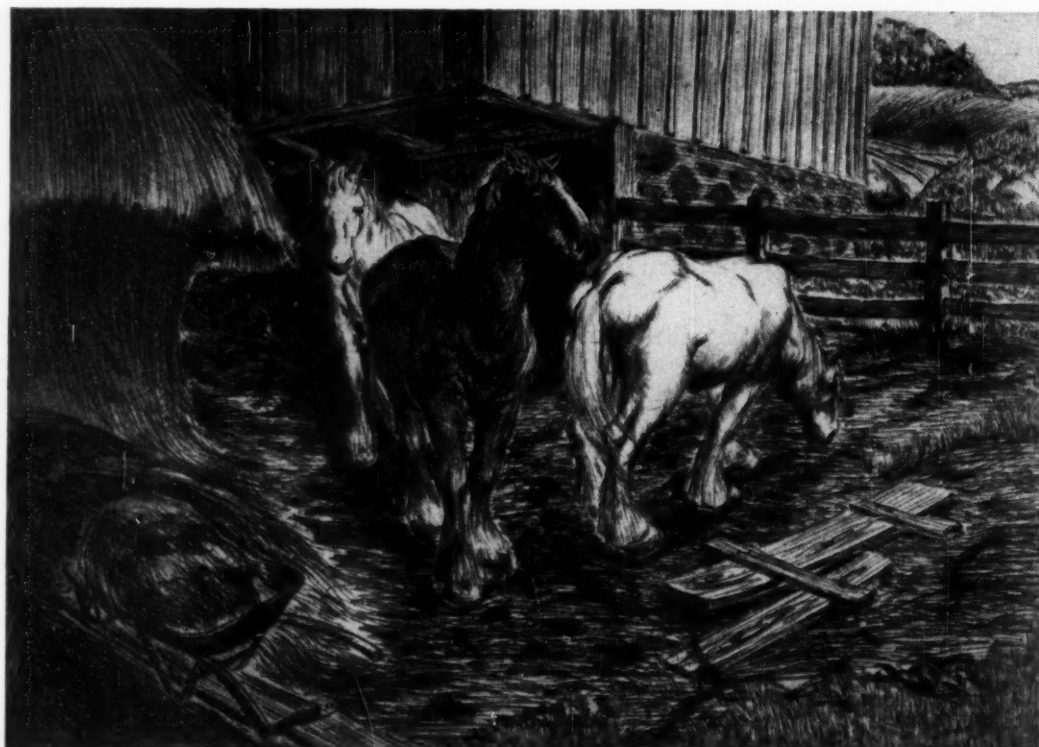
5. Give the children freedom to live with art, free from inhibitions and free to express their very own thoughts and experiences.

There was a time when teachers entered the rural school, bound and determined to bring to rural people what they considered "the advantages and standards of an urban situation". The result was a stilted, unnatural situation which bred discontent, self-consciousness, and inhibitions. Today we are beginning to recognize the richness and fertility of our rural environment.

Art in the modern rural school should be the nervous system of the curriculum, acting as an integrating stimulus, bringing life and vitality, bringing sensitivity and an interrelationship of all its parts. Modern rural school art is based on appreciations, not skills; on true rural experiences, not on superficially applied "art tricks"; on individual expression which fosters independent thought and self-assurance, and on a development of an awareness to the beauties which lies in homely places.

BARN YARD

An etching by Le-Roy Flint, made at Cleveland Federal Art Project.



NATIVE TRADITION AND THE ARTS

By Fletcher Collins, Jr.,
Head of English Dept.
Elon College, No. Car.

There is a curious ambivalence in much of the work done in the arts by rural agents. A belief in rural education and rural people is set against a sense that rural people have been cheated of experience in the arts, and that we must therefore bring the arts of the city to country people so that they may know art. This is in effect the missionary approach which once upon a time reveled in contributing trousers to aborigines and South Sea islanders.

In rural areas this approach to education in the arts is easy to understand, if not to sympathize with, as a product of our American experience. An offshoot of European culture, our earliest efforts in all the arts were naturally in imitation of European masters from whom we had lately come; our poets were reflections of English poets, our musicians were Germanic or Italianate, and so on. As the Industrial Revolution encouraged rapid growth of urban centers, those centers not only retained a worshipful attitude toward European art but developed an opposite belief, probably as a backwash from the frontier, that the newest and biggest expression, and the most utilitarian, was the best. Reno still greets us as "The Biggest Little City in the World"; radio and movies emphasize size, quantity, and novelty. This latter movement divorced us from a genuine understanding of European art-forms, and left us committed mainly to a belief in size and in the power of money. We stood in awe of the Metropolitan Opera House, yet we had no concept which would make opera relevant to our lives. And we called an actual producer in art a genius and consigned him to a special world which we could not enter.

When to this dogged determination to appreciate what we did not understand is added the concomitant products of industrialization, a dislocation of the rural economy, the missionary approach is understandable. We logically assumed that because the farms and villages were economically inferior to urban industry they were also artistically depressed.

During the past decade this inflation of urban civilization in America has been pricked, and we are now not so sure that our goal for all Americans is more and more of the urban blessings, technological and artistic. A leading sociologist, Howard W. Odum, lately concludes that "the verdict is one for too much civilization and too little culture". Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities* reflects this same uneasiness about the future of American culture, if that culture stems from Megalopolis. A third ma-

jor stage in the cultural evolution of the American people seems to be at hand.

That stage, if able to develop fully, will mean a decentralization of large communities, a return to life on the land, a repudiation of size and the social organization required to maintain size, and in the arts a reconstruction of rural traditional resources. No longer, then, is there any excuse for the missionary approach to rural culture. Indeed, the reverse attitude is clearly demanded. The moment is ripe for the exploration and expanded use of art resources which the stable, functional, rural culture has for centuries maintained. That this culture has been disturbed by the impact of modernity and overlooked in education no one will deny, but there is an equal certainty that this culture still contains the essential elements. The rural traditions of native creativeness in art are still a pattern for what our national cultural experience should be.

If these prognostications are reliable, the opportunities for rural workers are today enormous. So are the responsibilities. First must come exploration, discovery of what country people in America have always known of art-forms, and next must come intelligent use of what has been rediscovered. Where are these resources to be found? And what are they, anyway?

Still without naming them, I may say from experience that these traditional arts are to be found abundantly in nearly every one of the forty-eight states, that they are the unostentatious possession of many millions of families living in all sections of rural America, and that they are everywhere continuous and consanguineous in a tradition which extends back to colonial times and thence back to the Middle Ages and to the cultural cradle of English-speaking peoples. If a full look at the geographical extent of these art resources could now be had (and it cannot yet) it would dazzle the most ignorant person into wonder both at their national scope and at our erstwhile failure to recognize them as the proper basis of American art. The sources are widespread and deep. Let no one longer prattle of "southern" or "mountain" or "hill-billy" or "hick" art in music or whatever form.

What indeed are these vast resources? That such a question needs a categorical answer is itself an indication of how ignorant we literate but largely uncultured people are. In music these resources are ballad-melodies, song-tunes, fiddle-tunes, the melodies of so-called "white spirituals." Hundreds, even

thousands of them. In poetry they are the same ballads and songs—a rich store of narrative and lyric poetry which makes on a little apologetic for the poetry of those whose faces now grace our postage stamps—and a welter of legends, tall tales, proverbs, local anecdotes, and lore of various kinds. In the dance there is the omnipresent square-dance, the play-party singing games, and the several interrelated forms of the solo dance, the jig. Of square-dance figures there are as yet uncounted hundreds, of play-party dances an equal wealth. In the handicrafts there are the traditional forms, which consistently derive their design from the same cultural tradition as that of the songs and dances: quilting, pottery, basket-making, wood-carving, furniture-making, blacksmithing and metal-working, the making of farm utilities, weaving, printing, and so on. Their enumeration fails to emphasize their human meanings as group experience and tradition.

One significant thing about these arts is the fact that always they are arts to be used, to participate in, to produce in, to attain quality in, and only rarely are for an audience to try to "appreciate". This fact not only explains why there has never been much publicity attendant upon them, why they have existed so quietly in the hurly-burly of American civilization, but also explains their persistence and their vitality. When radio hill-billies make music solely for listeners, and as an adjunct of advertising, the music bears almost no likeness to the traditional rural music which it purports to be. When one asks a countryman about his abilities in song and fiddling or story-telling, he is invariably diffident. As only one of many producers out of the commonly held tradition, he does not feel that either he or his repertoire is remarkable.

All of which points to the corollary fact that these arts are truly alive, are an intimate and natural function of living. And that is the ideal situation which art teachers and all those interested in furthering genuine culture have for some years been attempting to engender. The attempt has been enormously difficult, if not impossible, because it has been *in vacuo*, has not grown from the primary sources of art expression in America, our traditional arts.

The possessors of this tradition are not queer folk. Their number is greater than anyone today knows, and nearly every person whose family or friends have lived in America for more than a few years possesses at least a portion of the heritage. The singing game, **London Bridge**, is universally known, and is an integral part of that tradition; so is another childhood favorite, **Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush**; so are the ballads of **Casey Jones**, **Old Ninety-Seven**, and **Frankie and Johnny**. The difference between urban people and those who possess the tradition more completely is one of degree, not of kind. In fact, an inventory of one's own repertoire of traditional art-expressions often yields surprising results. It is merely that urban experience,

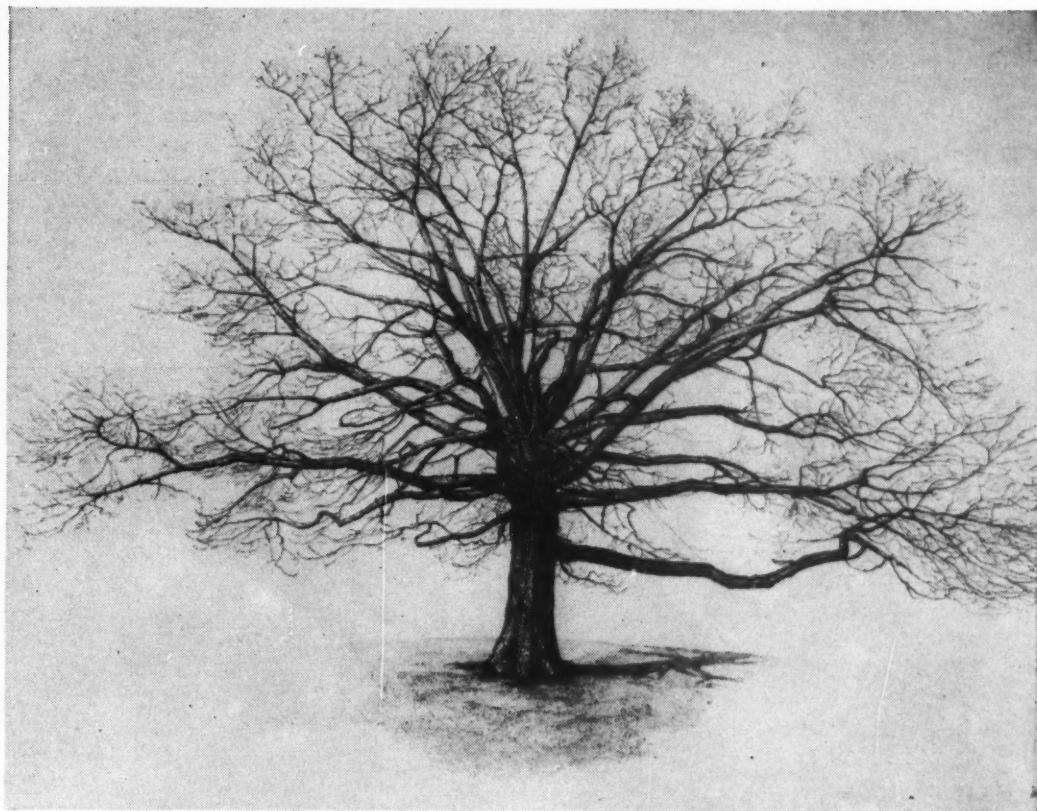
which for all Americans is very recent and limited in time, has temporarily submerged the use and significance of these cultural resources. When we or our immediate ancestors left the farm, or when the village became a city, no one bothered to emphasize the virtue of retaining these arts, and when "art appreciation" was invented it turned to the more pretentious compositions of the great Europeans and their American imitators. Thus the schools made no attempt to preserve the uses of the tradition, and it remained mainly in the family. For the singing of **Barbara Allen** the schools substituted Longfellow's **Evangeline**; for the square-dance and the play-party, Physical Education.

But the tradition, always socially transmitted without benefit of books or fashions, remains active in the cultural bloodstream of the people, of the American people. Those who in the last few years have had new opportunities to hear and sing the old ballads, dance the square-dance figures, and recall the lusty legends of such as Paul Bunyan, Davey Crockett, and Mike Fink, react as by a transfusion. Those who are going up and down the country singing and playing the traditional ballads are finding a response which goes far beyond the usual excitement of a novelty. Richard Dyer-Bennet, who has sung European and American folk-songs to hundreds of audiences in many cities of the United States reports that while the European varieties are interesting to his hearers the indigenous songs, even when not previously known to his listeners, evoke a response which in eagerness and warmth surprise him. The explanation of this phenomenon would seem to be that our traditional arts are permanently significant to us because they contain patterns of rhythm and melody and language which are not only esthetically sure but are also an expression of our historical and group experience.

There is, then, every reason for rural workers to feel close to the sources of American cultural life, and an urgency for such workers to aid in the discovery and extended use of our traditional arts. If more Americans were encouraged to believe in this heritage, rather than to neglect it for the commercialized forms of entertainment, there is no telling what native richness and stability would do to American culture. For when the basic resources are fully used, they expand the tradition, enrich it, and fill it in. The arts tradition in America has little drama, painting, sculpture, or architecture, yet all of these arts are able to get design and content from the traditional forms. The saga of Paul Bunyan gives substance, spiritual sustenance, to the immensely satisfying structure and sculptural detail of Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood; the ballad, **The Jealous Lover Of Lone Green Valley**, becomes the driving force behind a painting of that name by Thomas Benton. Local history and legend build up into a mural for the town post office. Drama is just beginning to realize the power latent in traditional ma-

BLACK OAK TREE

Made in the soft ground process by Paul Kucharyson at Cleveland, Ohio, Federal Art Project.



ON THE ROAD TO MULBERRY

A linoleum relief cut by Sheffield Kazy, Cleveland, Ohio, Federal Art Project.

terials. Beginning with simple ballad-plays, a college English class in the South is already on the way toward the re-creation of genuine music-drama. The appeal to Italians of their opera is not to be explained by a racial predilection for the operatic form, but by the fact that every Italian recognizes in his operas the indigenous melodies of Italian tradition. So also the Germans understand the symphonies of the three B's.

There is much to be done ere ever the renaissance arrives. Many people must move long distances in the uses of art. Schools and colleges must recognize the value of traditional art materials to the curriculum; teachers must themselves understand these values. Poets, composers, playwrights, painters, sculptors, architects, and craftsmen must grow up with a strong feeling for these materials. And families rich and poor must continue to immerse their children in the cultural heritage.

In all these developments, toward which we seem to be moving today, the rural worker, whether specialist in art or not, stands and works on the frontier. There, in rural America, lies the greatest nutriment for the arts and for culture.



ART BEGINS AT HOME

An exhibition recently shown at the Baltimore Museum of Art

▼

Rugs by V. Soske were in the galleries of handmade furnishings. Not only finished products were exhibited, but also articles in various stages of manufacture.

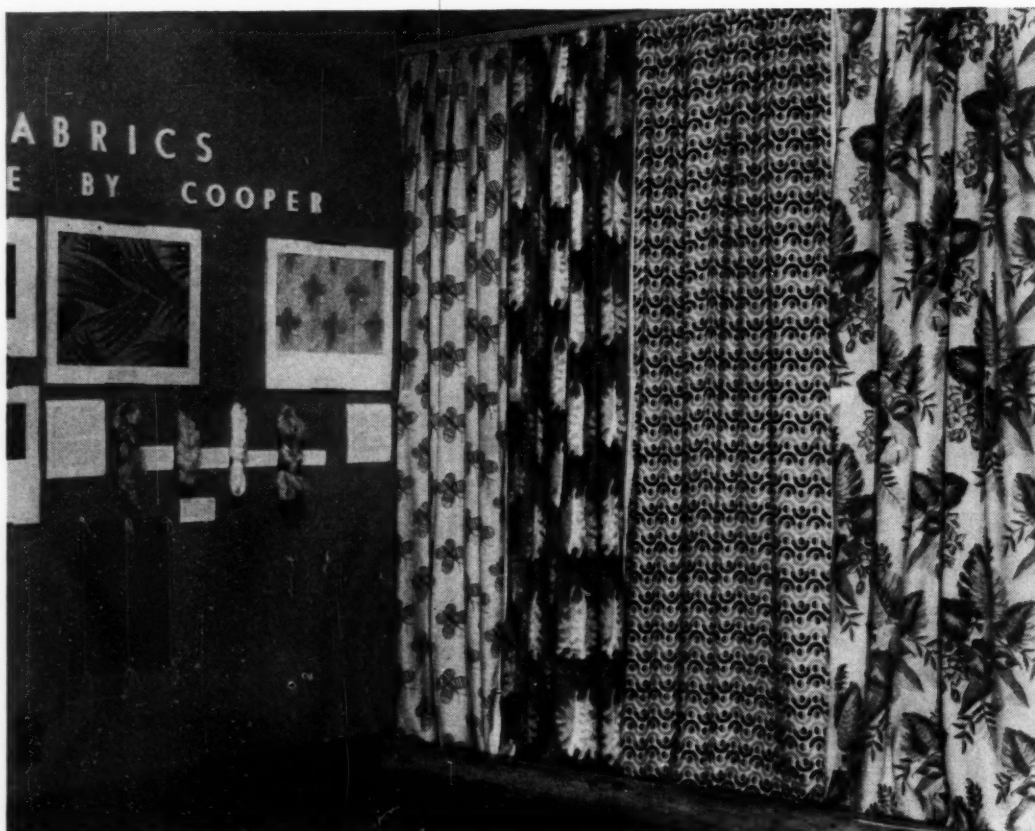
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In the section of handmade furnishings were fabrics by Scalamandre and fabrics by Dan Cooper.

▲



FAIR IN THE EAST

The World's Fair 1940 announces three major exhibitions of contemporary and classic art assembled and ready for the opening, which occurred on May 11. It has also announced a climatic Art Week scheduled for the week of June 22, and promises painting and sculpture will abound throughout the exposition grounds in Renaissance spirit. By this means it hopes to be a spearhead of the growing movement to bring art closer to the common people where it belongs.

Heading the list of art activities is a new Exhibition of Masterpieces of Art, which is expected to transcend in artistic interest the show of 1939. The general director of the exhibition is Professor Walter Pach, who announces this show will begin with Sixteenth Century painters, but will place the main emphasis on artists of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries. The Spanish Schools of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries will be represented by important works of such painters as El Greco, Velasquez, Ribera, Murillo, Goya, and Lucas.

A section of the 1940 Masterpieces of Art expected to attract particular attention will be devoted to French painters of the Nineteenth Century up to Cezanne. Other masters of this period will be liberally represented, including Ingres, David, Delacroix, Gericault, Daumier, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Seurat.

More than eight hundred works of art produced by WPA artists throughout the United States will be on display as part of the great exhibition of American Art Today in the general exhibit area. On view in other galleries a series of exhibitions will be presented by various national art societies and associations. Demonstrations of art technique and use of new media are presented daily in studio workshops scattered throughout the building. The visitor may watch artists at work designing murals, carving stone, pulling proofs from lithographic and etching presses.

IN THE MUSEUMS

The Delgado Museum in City Park, New Orleans, has recently shown two exhibitions of prints, one the dry points of William Woodward, and the other an exhibition of etchings by Bertha E. Jacques under the auspices of the Louisiana Society of Etchers.

Professor Woodward's collection of etchings after his paintings is a permanent recorded history of New Orleans and its many varied types of architecture before time and progress swept most of it away. Mrs. Jacques's contribution to the graphic arts falls in two divisions. In black and white she has done a variety of subjects—scenes from European cities, charming bits from Japan, little-known corners around Chicago, etc.

The Associated American Artists' Galleries, 711 Fifth Avenue, New York City, will present a group show of recent paintings by members of the organization through July 15. It will include works by Thomas Benton, George Biddle, Aaron Bohrod, Nicolai Cikovsky, Arnold Blanch, Paul Burlin, James Chapin, Lewis Daniel, John DeMartelly, Ernest Fiene, Don Freeman, David Fredenthal, Irwin Hoffman, Luis Quintanilla, Georges Schreiber, Charles Shannon, Wallace Smith, Raphael Soyer, Manuel Tolegian, Grant Wood, and Jacques Zucker.

FOR JUNE, 1940



Expression in clay is related to arrangement in Los Angeles Public School art Classes.

"Train Wreck," a wash drawing by Lionel S. Reiss of New York City, is the big prize winner in the Artist As Reporter Competition sponsored by the Museum of Modern Art and PM, New York's forthcoming evening newspaper, according to a recent announcement. Mr. Reiss' drawing not only won the \$250 popular prize voted by the public during the two weeks since the exhibition of competition drawings opened at the Museum, but had already been awarded one of the \$50 prizes in previous judging by the jury.

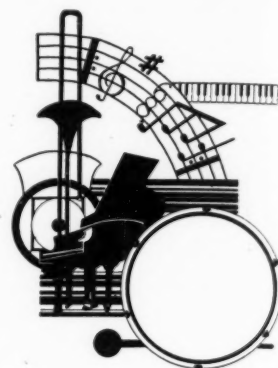
The runner-up in the popular prize was "The List" by Georges Schreiber, a crayon in black and red which shows a group of grief-stricken, terrified peasants reading a war list nailed to a tree.

Nelson A. Rockefeller, president of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York City, announces that the Museum will present a concert series of Mexican music arranged and supervised by Carlos Chavez, Mexico's foremost composer and conductor. The series, given in the Museum's auditorium, will be held in conjunction with the exhibition of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art, which opened to the public on May 15. A special orchestra has been assembled with instrumentalists selected by Mr. Chavez from the men of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and augmented by Mexican performers specially brought to New York for the series. Like the exhibition itself, which will show the modern art of Mexico against the background of that country's entire artistic culture, the musical programs will trace the development of Mexican music from ancient times through the Colonial period, down to our own day.

To run through June 9 the Cleveland Museum of Art has announced its Twenty-second Annual May Show of Work by Cleveland Artists and Craftsmen, and following that, from June 13 through July 14, it will present the Sixteenth Exhibition of Contemporary American Oils.



*“Let’s sing of the deep---
And the Treasures therein---”
And let’s pass it around awhile.*



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